

# NEWS AND NOTES

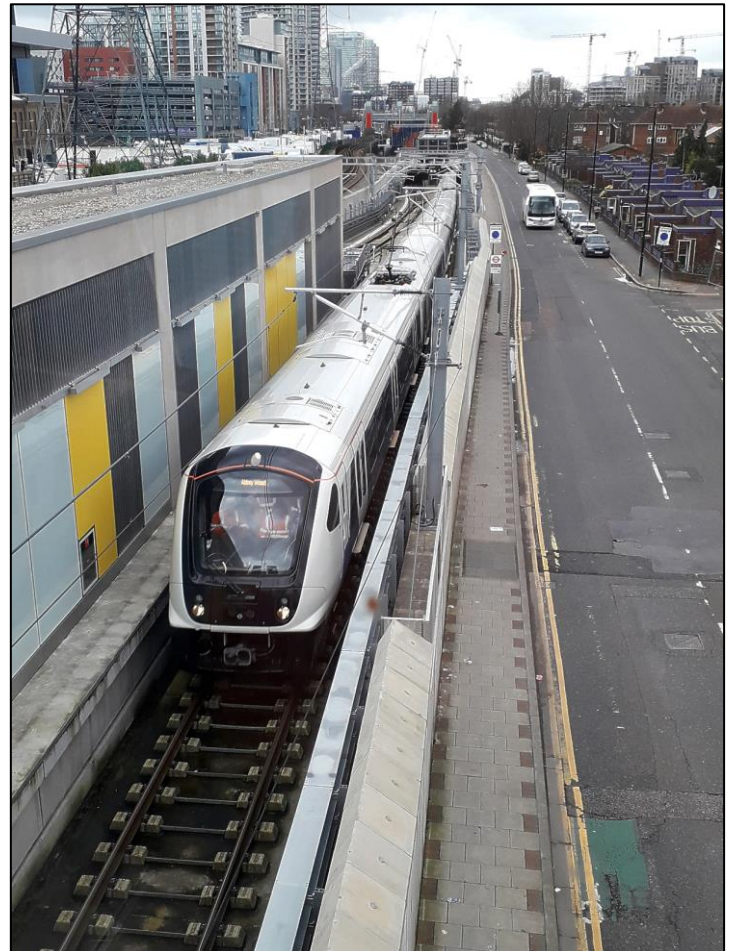
## KENNINGTON



*Above: New passageways built at Kennington have been unveiled but are not yet in use, as seen on 8 February 2020. The City branch platforms were closed between 26 May 2018 and 16 September 2018 during construction work.*

**Photo: Brian Kemp**

## CROSSRAIL TRAINING RUNS







**Above:** (Left) A Crossrail class 345 pauses at Custom House on a training trip westbound to Paddington. The DLR outbound track to Beckton is to the right of the train.

**Above:** (Right) An eastbound train on a training trip arrives at Custom House. To the right is Victoria Dock Road.

**Left:** The next DLR station east from Custom House is Prince Regent, where a three-vehicle train is seen berthed heading east to Beckton. The Crossrail tracks are to the right and in the distance may be seen Custom House station – the DLR station awaits Crossrail and has been rebuilt to serve it. At present, some of the rebuilt areas have been hoarded off, pending completion of Crossrail.

Once Crossrail opens, access to and from it will be at the eastern end of the DLR platforms, where the access is currently hoarded off with new escalators installed but covered over.

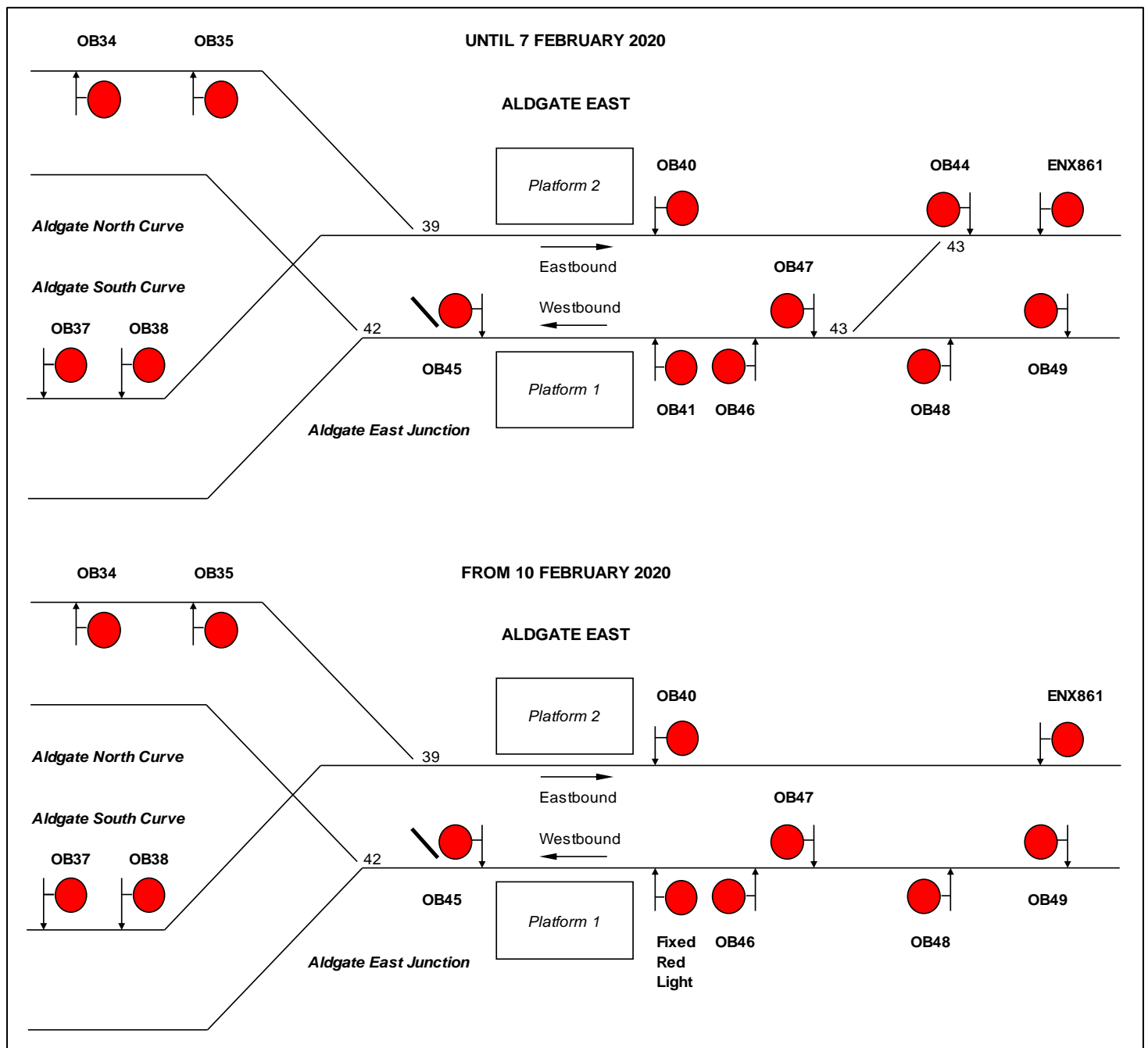
**All photos: Brian Hardy on 3 February 2020**

## **ALDGATE EAST**

Over the weekend of 8/9 February 2020 the crossover just east of Aldgate East was decommissioned and removed and the track plain lined ready for the start of traffic on Monday 10 February 2020. The two trains scheduled to reverse at Aldgate East early on Sunday mornings now terminate at Whitechapel and reverse west to east.

The first train west from Whitechapel to Aldgate East thus became 06.46 (instead of 06.16) and the first eastbound from Aldgate East became 07.06 (instead of 06.26).

**Overleaf:** Before and after situation at Aldgate East – and before the commissioning of the new signalling system.



## GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY ...

By the time you read this, all remaining office staff in 55 Broadway should have been transferred elsewhere, leaving an empty building – until the developers move in and take over at some time in the future. In the last issue of *Underground News*, we featured a series of photographs taken by Kim Rennie when the building was still fully functional.

A 'last look' by your Editor on Thursday 6 February will not duplicate those photos but will concentrate on his reminiscences in his nearly 40-year career with London Transport. However, not all of my career was spent working there, just about half of it. But, of course, there were a number of visits to "the Ivory Tower", beginning on my first day of service, when I had to report to an office on the sixth floor to sign paperwork and collect my staff pass before heading off to the Railway Training Centre at White City. The lifts at 55 Broadway at that time was a bit like "Grace Brothers" – each of the four were operated manually by a lift attendant.

Then came the odd visit for a promotional interview and then in September 1973, to the Head Controller's office in room 222 in the east wing. This marked the start of training as a Traffic Controller and (fortunately) I returned in January 1974 for approval. This took place in the Traffic Superintendent's office next door to room 222 in the days of power cuts and saving of electricity. It was mid- afternoon on a very dull and damp January day – the lights were out (to save electricity) and we could just about see one another in the gloom. (Whether they could actually see who or what they were approving is anyone's guess!).

The Head Controller's office sounds a rather grandiose place, being the overall control room for the whole of the Underground. But that couldn't be further from the truth. The Head Controllers were

relocated there in 1962 from above Leicester Square station, at the very beginning of de-centralisation of the control offices. Room 222 was a small room which contained two desks, one for the Head Controller and one for the Information Assistant. There was also a small 'cupboard' (as is probably best to describe it) where service information messages were broadcast to ticket offices and important locations around the network via a tannoy system. There was also the teleprinter within, where delays to the service were relayed to certain locations, such as railway depots, signal engineers and Divisional offices (as they were then). And that was it.

One of the few items of interest in room 222 were the train interval clocks, which were also replicated in the 55 Broadway foyer and (then) in some other important locations. These showed the intervals between trains for most lines as they passed a certain point in the central area. Each train occupied a specific track circuit and its passing was indicated by a mark on a circular paper 24-hour 'clock'.

My return to 55 Broadway was in 1984 as Head Controller and by then the small room had gained an extra desk for the staff taxis. There were four Head Controllers and four Information Assistants then, working round the clock.

That is where I stayed until I became Control Manager in 1989. In theory, a '9-5' post (you know the rest about 9-5 jobs!) and my first office was in the far corner of the west wing, hitherto occupied by the Officers' Dining Club, where the windows opened out right by the canteen extractor fan! A better office soon followed on the third floor east wing, which was still arranged with individual offices off a central corridor.

On the tenth floor was a 'proper' staff restaurant (called 'Ten') but also doubled up as a function area as well – many a retirement 'do' took place there, including my own.

And then came the Company Plan, following which I spent two enjoyable years with the Rolling Stock Engineer at Acton Works – another iconic building. Return to 55 Broadway came in December 1993, by which time the Head Controller's functions had been merged with those of the Operations Command Centre (OCC – for the Underground Ticketing System – UTS) as a result of the Company Plan.

The new set up was known as the Network Control Centre (NCC). The OCC Managers and Head Controllers were abolished in name and became NCC Duty Managers (same meat, different gravy). The accommodation still comprised room 222 but the partitions in the adjacent two rooms were removed to make one large NCC with its extra desks and functions. This was a temporary arrangement until a purpose-built Network Control Centre was opened in 1995 on the first floor 'Wing Over Station'. And that was where I happily stayed until I retired on 29 April 2005.

Since then I have returned to '55' a few times, most often to give evening presentations to enthusiast groups on the seventh floor in the east wing meeting room, where the LT 'great and good' were based.

So today (6 February 2020) was a nostalgia trip and to bid farewell to 'an old friend' which, for the main part, has left me with many happy memories of great times. In those intervening years, the seventh floor east wing area is almost unchanged, although now empty. My old office on the third floor east wing was opened out many years ago to open plan (as was the trend of many offices in recent years) and then accommodated the Timetables and Duty Schedules teams until they, too, moved to Palestra.

The Network Control Centre in the Wing Over Station was retitled Network Operations Centre shortly after I retired and in 2008 the room was refurbished. Later, in May 2013, the NOC moved to Palestra at Southwark and in another reorganisation was retitled London Underground Control Centre (LUCC). However, the room in the Wing Over Station remained as a standby centre for emergency purposes and at the time of writing was occupied again for three weeks while the facilities at Palestra were reorganised.

The truth of it all is that it is rather sad, but onwards and upwards for the future, as they say by they that know better. But without doubt, there will be many 55 Broadway ghosts around for years to come. And what would Ashfield and Pick have made of it all?

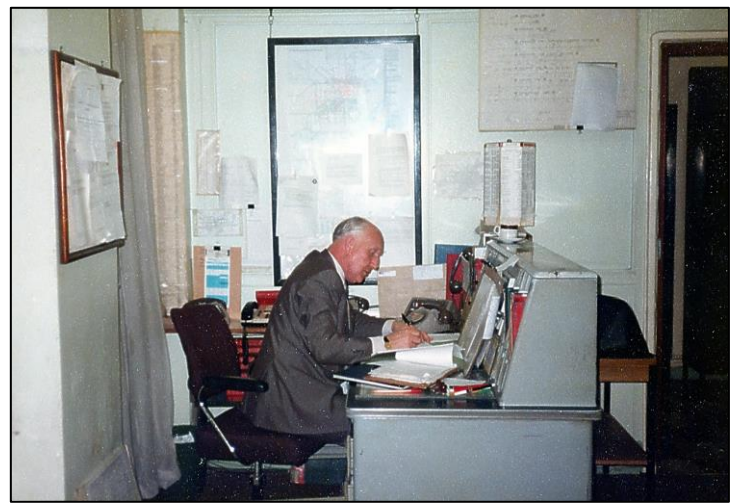
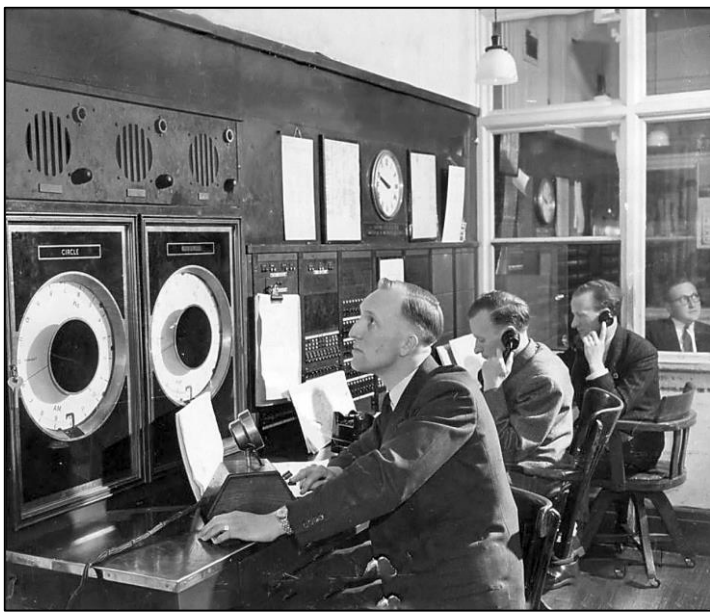
These notes are just some personal thoughts and observations and not to tell the story of the building or its functions. But rest assured, if there is anyone out there willing to undertake such a work, there will be many an interesting story to be told (and probably plenty that are best not told!) ...

Further reading:

*Underground News* No.598, October 2011, pages 581-585.

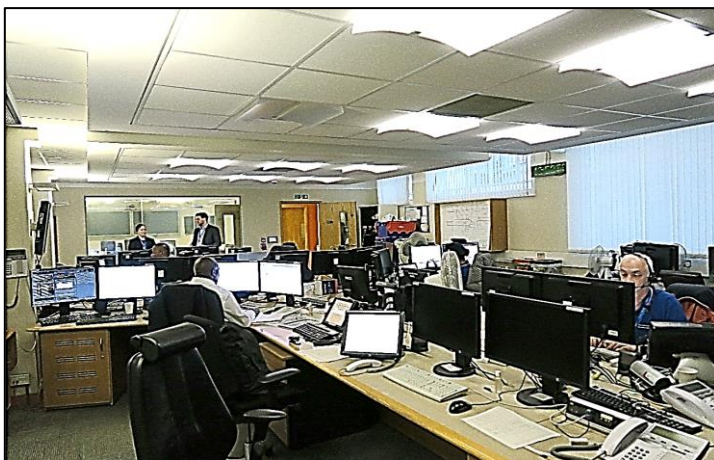
*Underground News* No.644, August 2015, pages 441-443.





*Square station (Above, Left) with pairs of lines separated by a partition as seen here, with the Head Controllers 'circulating' as necessary line by line as incidents occurred. When the Head Controllers and Information Assistants were relocated to 55 Broadway in 1962, the office provided there was very small and could be described as 'functional' at best. The gentleman in the left-hand photo is Controller Ken James, who later became Head Controller and is seen at his desk in room 222 at 55 Broadway (Above, Right).*

**Photos: LT Museum (Above, Left) and Brian Hardy Collection (Above, Right)**



*Two views of the purpose-built Network Control Centre (Above) in the Wing Over Station, which opened in 1995, replacing the inadequate facilities in room 222. The view (Above, Left) looks towards the Manager's, Incident and Information desk areas at the back, behind which is the NCC conference room. Behind that was the BTP control centre. On the left is the desk for telephone fault reporting. Taken from the Manager's and Incident Desk area (Above) and looking towards the front of the NCC, the Emergency Response Unit desk is beyond on the left, while the desks in the distance are for the Underground Ticketing System (UTS)*

*and name and address checks. In 2008 the original purpose-built NCC was refurbished, updating equipment and facilities. The NCC relocated to Palestra at Southwark in 2013 and was retitled London Underground Control Centre. However, the control centre returned to Wing Over Station (Above, Left) in late-January and early-February 2020 while alterations to the layout was made at Palestra and is as seen on 6 February 2020.*

**Photos: John Greenaway (Centre, Left and Right) and Brian Hardy (Above, Left)**



# BARBICAN



**Top:** Very recently, the blue hoardings at the west end of the island platform at Barbican have been removed, restoring the platform to its proper width at that end. The former City Widened Lines may be seen on the left with severed trackwork and the SSR lines to the right. The outline of the former signal box may be seen on the headwall at the end of the island platform where the brickwork is lighter in shade.

**Above:** (Left) Close up of the former City Widened Lines tunnel mouth. Quite what the purpose of the new barrier is for will undoubtedly become apparent in the fulness of time ...

**Centre:** (Right) Following the removal of the blue hoardings, two new free standing roundels have been installed at the west end of the island platform. This view from the 'disused' side looks across towards an eastbound train. Quite why the station name has been installed on the 'disused' side remains unclear at this stage.

**Above:** (Lower) Looking east along the disused City Widened Lines, the Down platform on the right. These tracks are to be reinstated for S Stock stabling at some time in the future but will not be used for passenger service.

**All photos: Brian Hardy on 6 February 2020**



## PADDINGTON BAKERLOO



The Bakerloo Line ticket hall at Paddington is without doubt in a very cramped area and work is about to begin on the reconstruction and enlargement of the ticket hall and provide a new station entrance. The existing entrance leads to Praed Street (not to be confused with the 'Metropolitan' grade II listed entrance diagonally opposite). The Bakerloo entrance dates back to 1913 (Left) when the Bakerloo was extended there from Edgware Road and will be permanently closed. The small ox blood red-tiled cuboid at street level will be replaced by a more accessible entrance under the Paddington Square development. London Street and the Paddington 'ramp' will be merged and fully pedestrianised, which will leave no trace of the original entrance. Although the ox blood tiled entrance has survived the ornate signage hasn't, as seen (Below), having lost much of its character. When Paddington (Bakerloo) was being refurbished back in the 1980s, in the subway leading from the main line to the Bakerloo Line, this tiled sign (Left) was briefly uncovered and is also believed to date back to 1913 when the Bakerloo Line reached Paddington.



**Photos: LT Museum (Top Left)  
Brian Hardy (Left)  
Kim Rennie (Below)**





## MILL HILL EAST



During the afternoon of Friday 14 February 2020, the new MIP lift at Mill Hill East entered passenger service, showing the lower landing (Left) and upper landing (Right).

**Both photos: Nigel Gibson**

## CBTC DE-SCOPE PROPOSAL

With financial pressures upon TfL, there have long been rumours of proposed economies in the 4LM upgrade programme. The LU Executive meeting on 23 January 2020 considered a paper on a CBTC de-scope proposal, which provides an indication of current thinking, still at an early stage. With commissioning so far only reaching Euston Square, installation has continued up to SMA9 to Moor Park. This includes the first section of CBTC underlay, where new colour light signals are provided for Chiltern trains whilst S Stock will operate as in currently commissioned areas. This system is planned to Amersham and also to Uxbridge for Piccadilly Line trains. Consideration was given to retaining existing signalling on the Uxbridge branch until the Piccadilly Line resignalling is finalised. However, necessary life extension works on existing signalling make this option poor value for money, and the original underlay proposal is still supported.

Another CBTC system to allow interworking with non-fitted trains on the Ealing, Richmond and Wimbledon branches, known as overlay, would retain existing signalling but allow it to communicate with S Stock to allow automatic train working. To avoid the costs of developing this version of CBTC, it is proposed to retain the current method of working west of Stamford Brook, and instead install the underlay system to Wimbledon. It was always intended that the new Piccadilly Line signalling would be installed from east of Acton Town to Ealing Broadway. Future resignalling to Richmond will be cheaper without the overlay being installed now. An alternative to tripcock protection is to be considered for these branches. The underlay system to Wimbledon would provide capacity for additional trains diverted from Ealing when the Piccadilly Line resignalling is eventually commissioned. In addition to the red and green aspects, a blue aspect will be installed on each stop signal head and repeating signal head as per the requirements of Underlay Principles. This aspect will only be lit for an S Stock train. Piccadilly Line train operators to Uxbridge will drive to the aspects presented by the signals. All signals will be 'controlled' signals and there will be no 'auto' signals. Fog repeaters will be provided.



## BATTERSEA AND NINE ELMS

The manufacture of 113 new London Underground roundels is underway for both new Northern Line Extension stations at Battersea Power Station (62) and Nine Elms (51), expected to open in the autumn of 2021. Work on extending the line is currently focused on the fit-out of the new stations, including the installation of escalators, installing the power supply and extending the signalling used on the existing Northern Line onto and throughout the new extension.

**Photo: Transport for London**